

FOREIGN MAIL SERVICE.

GEN. BINGHAM'S AMENDMENT DISCUSSED.

DEMOCRATS TAKEN BY SURPRISE--THEY SHOW A PREFERENCE FOR FOREIGN SHIPS--A LIVELY DEBATE IN THE HOUSE.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, July 13.—The debate in the House today on the proposition to encourage and promote commercial relations between the United States and Central and South America and the West Indies by paying American steamship lines a fair price for carrying the mails to those countries, took an unexpected turn from General Bingham, of Pennsylvania, a Republican member of the Post Office Committee, the present law provides that the amount paid for the transportation of United States foreign mails in American steamships shall not exceed the United States inland and sea postage. The Senate amendment proposes to appropriate \$800,000, and it authorizes and directs the Postmaster-General to enter into contracts with American steamship companies for a period of not less than five years, for the transportation of the mails to the countries mentioned, and to pay for said service at the rate of 21 per centum of the cost of outward voyage. The Bingham amendment provides that the Postmaster-General shall pay four times the sea and inland postage for the transportation of the mails to the several countries mentioned, and also to Australasia, Japan, China and the Sandwich Islands.

It appears that among the bills introduced this session was one by Chairman Blount, of the Post Office Committee, which was prepared in the House of Representatives, and which, it is understood, was favored by the Postmaster-General at the time of its preparation. In the course of today's debate Mr. Blount hotly declared that he did not favor the measure, but introduced it in accordance with a statement he had received, and expressed the belief that the Postmaster-General never saw approved the same. His bill is substantially the same as the Bingham amendment, except that it does not include the carrying of the mails from San Francisco to foreign ports on the Pacific.

General Bingham delivered a powerful argument in favor of his amendment, which would require an appropriation of \$800,000, instead of \$800,000 proposed by the Senate. He showed that equity demands a readjustment of the compensation paid for the transportation of the foreign mails in American steamships. When the law of 1858 was enacted, which provided that they should receive the sea and inland postage for that service, the rates of postage to foreign countries were more than four times as high as they now are, and the reduced rates directed by the law of compensation shall be changed to correspond in some degree with the reduction.

Chairman Blount replied in a speech which was loud enough, and his gestures were emphatic enough, but it is only fair to say that he did not successfully attack General Bingham's argument. He planned himself on Don Dickinson's free trade, anti-Americanism, and showed the country, and at the top of his voice. He declared that the increased compensation, if granted, would benefit only the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and a few other lines, which would divide the money among themselves. Mr. Blount also made the startling declaration that the mail service between the United States and South and Central America is "ample and satisfactory," a statement which, as Mr. Bingham said, "is a statement of fact, and not a statement of opinion."

CONTRASTS TO THE UNITED STATES POLICY. Governor Dingley's speech covered the whole ground, and it evidently worried the Democrats. Referring to the offer of the Argentine Republic to pay \$100,000 per annum to establish and maintain regular postal and commercial connection with the United States, provided the country would appropriate the equal sum, he said that the late Postmaster-General had expressed himself in favor of cooperation with that Republic, but thus far the best that the great and rich Republic of the United States could offer was a pitiful \$100,000 per annum, while all the mails between the United States and Europe, with a single exception, are carried in vessels which by a foreign flag. Last year the mail service of South and Central America, of which \$10,504 was paid to the United States and Brazil line, and at the rate of \$750 for the round of 10,500 miles. In the same year Great Britain paid \$2,200,000 for her foreign mail service; France paid \$5,154,000, and Brazil paid \$2,223,000.

Judge Holman, of course, opposed the amendment, and said substantially:

Mr. Felton, of California, made a capital speech in favor of the foreign mail service on the Pacific. He showed that only \$20,000 per year is paid by the United States for that service to American steamship companies, while the Government actually received for postage \$40,000 to \$47,000 per annum. He said that the Government should appropriate \$100,000 per year for the transportation of mails to the United States. The commerce between this country and Australasia amounts to \$14,000,000, and imports and exports amount to \$14,000,000. The Government, he said, should agree to deal fairly with the American Steamship Company. It was declared that the Bingham amendment, if passed, would fall into the hands of the British line whose steamers had from Victoria, British Columbia.

There was taken, and there were some indications that the amendment might be passed, but the House adjourned without a vote.

A SEVEN HOUR'S SPEECH ON THE TREATY. SENATOR GEORGE FINISHES A SPEECH REGUN AT THIRTEEN.

Washington, July 13 (Special).—Senator George, of Mississippi, finished his afternoon speech on the Fisheries treaty which he began yesterday. His speech, including the two hours and a half consumed by him yesterday, occupied in its delivery nearly seven hours. This is probably the longest speech ever made in the Senate. In substance, the speech was a single new idea; he did not throw any additional light upon the curious defense set up by the Administration.

There was, of course, the customary reference to the "free whiskey" plank in the Republican platform, though precisely what connection that plank had with the Fisheries question was not stated by the orator.

It might have been the close proximity of a glass of whiskey to the speaker, or it might have been the fact that Senator George retreathed himself at frequent intervals; if it was, certainly much of what he had to say can be accounted for, and also excused. At 4:40 the honorable Senator had just got down to the year 1781 in his historical survey of the question, and ten minutes afterward he plodded the State of Mississippi to come to his delivery nearly seven hours.

He said that he had been told that his country in case of a war would be the last to be found would be found where he was in the last years of his life.

"Which war?" innocently asked Senator Hoar.

"The last war with England, said," replied Mr. George with much dignity.

"Oh," came from a dozen throats and the galleries giggled.

Mr. George looked around with astonishment and lost his place.

He delayed the pervasion somewhat and spotted the fine effect which otherwise it would undoubtedly have produced.

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DRAFTSMAN OF THE AMERICAN BUREAU OF STEAM ENGINEERING.

MR. THOMAS IS SAID TO BE A COMPETENT MAN, AND ALSO SAID TO BE THE OWNER OF A NUMBER OF PATENTS FOR VARIOUS DEVICES FOR SHIP MACHINERY, ETC.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

SUCCESSIONAL DEMOCRATS IN WASHINGTON.

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DID HE KILL THREE WIVES?

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THE BROADWAY